Coon E-5 (no date) 1951 Ml Middle East Ml
Shluh
R.f 811.3

M
621
619
631
642

themselves appointed qā'id. With imperial sanction and modern rifles, they conquered tribe after tribe, dissolving the assemblies and setting out khalīfas and shaikhs in the neighboring valleys to carry out their orders.

These qā'ids settled down into three houses, those of the Glawi, Gundafi, and Mtugi, reading from east to west along the Atlas. (The family of the Glawi, now in its third generation, is headed by the powerful el Ḥajj Thāmi [Tihāmi], also pasha of Marrakesh.) These three absolute autocrats have so crushed the mountaineers under their control that only the oldest remember the earlier system of government. Each of them has a huge fortress, strategically located near the crest of the divide, as for example that of Telwet, which is the Glawi's stronghold. Inside high walls are a number of castles, with an inner court. Great granaries hold the tribute brought by the farmers; dungeons hide the starving bodies of bandits captured on the roads. Mountain Jews and Negro retainers throng the courtyard, and privileged visitors (I was one in 1927) eat in the guest chambers.

Delegating power to the three great qā'ids is one way of ruling without effort. These men, controlling private armies, could make or break sultans, and they have also figured in the politics of the French Protectorate in a fashion similar to the fabulously wealthy princes of India under the British. Robert Montagne speaks with feeling when he states that Native Affairs officers were able to take over the direction of the small confederation of Ida U Tanan before the Mtugi could swallow it.

Ruling by delegating power to a local autocrat is something new in Morocco, but farther east it is an old system, which we have already seen in operation in western Asia; this is the way both Romans and Sassanian Persians controlled the Nabatean Arabs. This is also the way that the shahs of Iran (when they have been strong enough) have dealt with the Bakhtiari and other tribesmen. The Iranian tribesmen, however, have a reason for unity, the need for order in their annual migration. The Shluh need no more unity than they had in 1860, at the price they have paid for it. What the French think of this system is not easy to discover.

R
[114]
278
813

By now the reader is ready to join me in entering the Rif, as I first did in 1926, the year of 'Abd el-Krīm's surrender. On the way into the tribe of Gzennaya we noticed that our dog was growing ill. He

1: Coon E-5 (no date) 1951 M1 Middle East

Rif mts

[278] soon died. Someone had poisoned him, not out of malice but as part
813 of a scientific experiment—to test a new batch of poison before using it on the intended human victim. This feeling for science is strong among the Riffians. Once in a local feud a warrior shot a hydrocephalic opponent, not because he was a dangerous foe but in order to see what was inside his head. At great risk of life the warrior crawled over an exposed bank to retrieve the body. With his kinsmen he carried it to the mosque, where the schoolmaster trephined the grotesque skull. Draining out some of the liquid, he tasted it with his finger. "It is a little salty," he said. Then they all went back to their fighting.

133 The village where this took place was hardly a village at all, since it
361 consisted of only thirteen houses in 1926. These were scattered along
621 both sides of the small but tumultuous mountain stream called the Water of Iherrushen, just above where it joined a larger river, the Bayu, which flowed swiftly out of a perpendicular-walled canyon. As one sees this country from above, the flattest ground is near the crest of the divide; consequently the villages are more frequent here than where it is steeper lower down. The upstream people also get the first use of the water, vital for irrigation.

346 If we look closely we will see that one of the houses is a mosque.
368 It has no minaret, but a white flag flying from the roof peak pro-
173 claims its holy purpose, which the whitewash on the porch and
621 around the outer rims of the windows confirms. Legend has it that the ancestor of the inhabitants of this village, one 'Abd el-Mumin (in Arabic al-Mu'min, from whom they and the village derive their name, Ulad 'Abd el-Mumin) walked up the waters of the Iherrushen one afternoon just as the sun was setting over the divide to the west, his wife and his cow and his dog wading with him. Silhouetted against the sunlight he saw this mosque, newly built and empty, its door open, standing before him. Faced with this miracle he scuffed off the grass sandals with which he had been protecting his feet from the sharp stones, and entered the holy place to pray. He and his sons hewed and walled terraces along the valley, felled some trees and planted others, and all lived peacefully until the valley was full and men fell to quarreling over fruit trees, women, and water.

621 The twelve houses which we saw held ten men with their thirteen
595 wives, nineteen sons, and fifteen daughters. That three men had two wives at once is no wonder, since six out of nine of their fathers